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Russian Reporter Seized by Canada for Spying

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[Chicago Tribune Press Service]

Ottawa, April 28—Vasily Tarasov, Ottawa correspondent for the Russian newspaper Izvestia, was taken into custody for espionage activity last night by royal Canadian mounted police.

He was turned over to the Russian embassy with orders to be out of the country within 24 hours. Tarasov, about 35 years old, who came here a year ago, does not have diplomatic immunity.

Prime Minister Lester Pearson in the house of commons today confirmed a report that Tarasov had picked up by mounties, but said that a further statement may be made later.

Caught In Camera Trap

"Within limitations of security," Pearson as asked by John G. Diefenbaker, Conservative opposition leader, "is it anticipated that further arrests are going to be made?"

"Not to my knowledge,"

Pearson said, "But we will be anxious to make a statement on the whole matter at the earliest possible date."

Why Tarasov should be expelled should be explained, rather than prosecuted for espionage, has puzzled his friends in the Ottawa press cops, since he does not have the immunity of a Russian diplomat. It has been suggested that if Tarasov were brought into court and convicted, Russiae might frame a western correspondent in Moscow on spy charges.

Another Identified As Spy

Tarasov is reported to have approached members of the defense department and the department of external affairs in attempts to obtain classified information, and was caught in a trap set by a civil servant at the request of the mounties.

A secret camera took pictures of Tarasov receiving fake

documents, which were in his possession when he was arrested.

A stocky, sociable man, fluent in English, Tarasov has been known in Ottawa as a cheerful gladder, always quick to buy drinks. He has been popular with members of the parliamentary press gallery, and at the National Press club. He said he came to Ottawa from Australia and New Zealand.

Last fall he made a trip to western Canada, visiting Winnipeg, Calgary, Vancouver, and Edmonton, at the height of the Canadian wheat shipments to Russia. He said in interviews that Russia did not really need wheat, but was buying it to help out the Canadian economy.

Two other Russian correspondents are in Ottawa, one for the Tass agency, and one identifying himself as a representative of a Russian farm magazine. A Tass correspondent, Nickolas Zheveinov, was

identified in the royal commission espionage report in 1946 as a member of a spy ring which worked out of the Russian embassy.

Last Spy Caught in 1961

The last Russian expelled from Canada was Lt. Col. Anatoly F. Loginov, assistant military attache at the soviet embassy here, who in late 1961 was caught receiving secret documents from a Canadian government employe, who tipped the mounties.

In 1956, Gennadi Popov, second secretary at the embassy, was expelled from Canada for attempting to get secret defense information from James Stanley Staples, a clerk at nearby Rockcliffe air station. Staples was fired as a security risk.

The famous Gouzenko spy investigation identified two former Tass correspondents here, Nicholas Zheivinov and Nikolai Afanasiev, as members of the Russian spy network. Both had left the country by the time the spy ring was disclosed in 1946.

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